



Legal Resource Sheet

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

(SNAP)

What is SNAP?

SNAP (formerly known as Food Stamps) provides nutritional assistance benefits to eligible children and families, senior citizens, and the disabled. SNAP helps you supplement your monthly food budgets so that you can buy the food you need to maintain good health and allows you to direct more of your available income toward essential living expenses. Once a month, your SNAP benefits will be added to an EBT card that works like a debit card. With your SNAP benefits, you can buy:

- Food
- Meals on Wheels
- Seeds and plants for food

If you receive SNAP benefits, you may also be eligible for:

- Discounted telephone installation
- Discounted monthly telephone bill and internet bill
- Discounted events and membership at some places

How do I qualify?

The Department of Human Services will decide if you are eligible for SNAP benefits by looking at the following:

Residency and Citizenship. You must be living in Tennessee to receive SNAP benefits in the state. Also, all SNAP household members must have a social security number or proof of having applied for one. To get SNAP benefits, you must be:

- a U.S. citizen, or
- a U.S. National, or
- a qualified alien (such as a Lawfully Admitted Permanent Resident
- While legal immigrants may be ineligible for SNAP benefits if they don't meet certain criteria, children in the household who are under 18 are often eligible.

Household Size. There are no specific age limits to receive SNAP benefits.

- Parents and their children 21 years old or younger living together are considered one household.
- Individuals living together and who purchase and prepare food together are treated as one household.

Household Income from All Sources. Countable income includes such things as employment, alimony and child support, disability benefits, SSI, unemployment benefits, and pensions.

- The SNAP program does not count scholarships, grants and loans used for tuition and fees, reimbursements, heating assistance, earnings of children age 17 and younger who are in school and most loans.
- In households which contain an elderly or disabled member, eligibility is assessed by net income (your income after deductions and taxes).
- SNAP rules allow for some income deductions, such as dependent care expenses incurred and medical expenses over \$35 for elderly or disabled household members.

Other things DHS will consider:

- To receive SNAP benefits, most able-bodied people between 16 and 59 years old must register for work, participate in the Employment & Training Program if offered, accept offers of employment, and cannot quit a job.
- The asset limit (assets are things you own that have value) is \$2,250 for most households and \$3,500 for households containing a member who is disabled or 60 years of age. Assets taken into account do not include such things as the home you are presently living in, household goods and personal property, real estate that is up for sale, vehicles used for family transportation or work, or vehicles with equity value under \$1,500.

If you have any questions about these rules call the **USDA SNAP Information Hotline at 1-800-221-5689.**

How do I apply?

If you would like assistance applying for SNAP benefits, contact Senior Information & Referral (SIR) at 865-546-6262. You can also reach out to the **Family Assistance Service Center at 1-866-311-4287** with questions or concerns.

If you are over 60 or disabled: You can apply by mail or be interviewed over the phone and get your SNAP by mail. You never need to go to DHS. Most seniors will only need to be interviewed once every year. You can also get an application at your local Department of Human Services (DHS) or you can also apply online at tn.gov/humanserv/forms.

When you are applying for SNAP, you may need this information to complete the application process:

- Social Security Number
- Your Identification.
Examples: Driver's License or State ID, Passport, Resident Alien Card, I-94 card, voter's registration card
- Proof of where you live.
Examples: a lease agreement, utility bill, phone bill, or driver's license with your address on it
- Proof of income.
Examples: check stubs, employer statements, award letters.

- Proof of housing costs.
Examples: mortgage payments, property tax, homeowner's insurance, rent receipt, lease agreements
- Proof of costs of utilities.
Examples include an electric bill, water bill, gas bill.
- You may be asked to provide more information during your interview. Your eligibility counselor will explain what information is needed, how to get it and help you if you need assistance.

Once you have turned in your application you will be interviewed by a case manager. The case manager must complete your application and decide on your case no longer than 30 days from the date you turned in your application.

What else do I need to know?

- **SNAP is free.** You never need to pay for SNAP.
- You do not pay sales tax on food that you buy with SNAP.
- If you work, you may still be eligible for SNAP.
- You must report all changes in household size and income immediately to your local DHS office.
- You have the right to appeal if your SNAP is denied, reduced, or stopped.

Prepared By: Kate Sands, Grandparents as Parents Program Intern, UT Law Class of 2022

Sources: <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap.html>;
<https://www.laet.org/legal-information/> (SNAP brochure); <https://www.ethra.org/programs/20/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

RESOURCES

USDA SNAP Information Hotline.....1-800-221-5689

SNAP Outreach Program (CAC)..... 865-524-2786

General Information and Referral

East TN Information and Referral..... 211 or 865-215-4211

Family Assistance Service Center.....1-866-311-4287

Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC)..... 865-546-3500

Knoxville City Services..... 311

Senior Information & Referral (CAC)..... 865-546-6262

Department of Human Services

Knox County DHS..... 865-594-6151

Anderson County DHS..... 865-425-6959

Blount County DHS..... 865-981-2350

Loudon County DHS..... 865-986-4749

Sevier County DHS..... 865-429-7005

Food Pantries, Food Box Programs, and Meals

Contact [East Tennessee Information and Referral at 211](#) for more information about additional local food pantries in your area.

Angelic Ministries..... 865-523-8884

Baptist Center..... 865-525-9068

Corryton Food Pantry (Rutherford Memorial United Methodist Church)..... 865-687-8438

Fish Pantries..... 865-247-0521

 Northwest Knox..... 865-971-4000

 East Knox..... 865-522-3474

 South Knox..... 865-577-9600

Harvest Rock Ministry..... 865-637-1295

Knoxville Dream Center (Mobile Food Trucks, call for locations)..... 865-688-9636

Ladies of Charity..... 865-247-5790

Love Kitchen..... 865-546-3248

Manna House (Cokesbury United Methodist Church)..... 865-693-0353

Salvation Army Knoxville..... 865-525-9401

 Maryville..... 865-983-7135

 Sevierville..... 865-908-4010

Shepherd of Hope Food Pantry..... 865-966-9626

Aging Services in Knox County

Knoxville-Knox County Office on Aging (CAC)..... 865-524-2786
 SNAP Senior Outreach Program..... 865-524-2786
 Grandparents as Parents Program (CAC)..... 865-524-2786
Senior Information & Referral (CAC)..... 865-546-6262
East Tennessee Area Agency on Aging & Disability..... 1-866-836-6678

Legal Resources

Knoxville Bar Assoc. Lawyer Referral..... 865-522-7501
Legal Aid of East Tennessee..... 865-637-0484
Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services..... 1-888-395-9297
Tennessee Justice Center..... 1-877-608-1009